

Valdosta State University.

## **Syllabus**

**MLIS 7150: Fall Semester 2014**

***Social Sciences Information Services***

**Howard S. Carrier**

### **Course Information:**

Course Number: MLIS 7150 Section IA, crn 82215

Course Title: Social Sciences Information Services

Course Description: [as per VSU 2013-2014 Graduate Catalogue]

*Prerequisite: MLIS 7100 or consent of Instructor. Examination of social science information domains and information resources, including the structures and bibliographies of the disciplines in electronic and print format. Various information formats are examined, and appropriate search and retrieval methods are explored*

Course Dates: Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> August 2014 – Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

Required Text: Although the course will involve both mandatory and suggested readings, there is no specific textbook that you are required to purchase. Readings will be made available to you through BlazeVIEW, or you will be advised how to access an electronic copy of a specific text using Odum Library or open-access resources. As work submitted for this class must comply with APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition, it may be useful for you to purchase a copy of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, (if you do not already own a copy). This book is available from Amazon.com at the price of \$24.07. See: [http://www.amazon.com/Publication-Manual-American-Psychological-Association/dp/1433805618/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1305123131&sr=8-1](http://www.amazon.com/Publication-Manual-American-Psychological-Association/dp/1433805618/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1305123131&sr=8-1)

### **Instructor Information:**

Instructor: Howard S. Carrier, LL.B. (Hons.), LL.M. (University of Leicester), M.S.L.S. (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), Assistant Professor & Reference Librarian, Odum Library, Valdosta State University.

Email: [hscarrier@valdosta.edu](mailto:hscarrier@valdosta.edu) Telephone: (office) 229-245-3744; (cell) 919-923-0391; Office Location: 2300 Odum Library.

**Office Hours:** You are welcome to contact me by email or telephone at any time, regarding your studies for this course. I shall reply to your email as soon as possible. If you contact me by telephone and I am not available, then please leave a voicemail with a telephone number at which you can be reached. I am also happy to answer student questions via chat. Up until 5pm EDT on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2014 you can chat with me via the Odum Library's chat service: <http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/library/general/live-chat.php> (please introduce your chat with the sentence: "MLIS 7150 student contacting Mr. Carrier"); from 19<sup>th</sup> September 2014 until the end of the course, for reasons I shall explain in BlazeVIEW, please chat with me via Gmail at [hsjcarrier@gmail.com](mailto:hsjcarrier@gmail.com) (note: you will need to create a (free) Gmail or Gmail-compatible account, in order to chat with me in Gmail).

### **Course Philosophy:**

As a professional librarian who chooses to work within the university, I view graduate students as colleagues within the academy, working towards the same goals as myself – the free exchange and dissemination of ideas, in order to better understand those issues that we have selected for study.

My aim is to teach this class from a practitioner's perspective. I am not a Library Science Professor; I am a practicing Reference Librarian and a subject specialist in law and social sciences librarianship. Reference Librarianship is my career, and teaching those who seek to join my profession is a weighty responsibility. In teaching this class I will do my utmost to provide you with a thorough overview of this area of the Reference Librarian's profession, in order to better prepare you for your own career.

There is an old cliché about there being, "No such thing as a silly question," which is certainly true for this class. All questions are welcomed and students are actively encouraged to share their thoughts, ideas, and opinions through the discussion board. It is imperative that we have lively, unfettered, on-topic conversations during this class. To this end: whilst there are no "silly" questions for this class, there **is** a definite obligation to ask and answer questions, and share your knowledge and ideas with your peers.

### **Course Objective:**

To reiterate: *the primary purpose of this class is to prepare you in answering reference questions related to the social sciences, whether you choose to work as a professional librarian in an academic or a public library.*

## **Course Assessment:**

Discussion boards. 7 discussion boards x 10 points per board = 70 points.

Worksheets. 7 worksheets x 15 points per worksheet = 105 points.

Midterm assignment: Student consultation memorandum OR Emailed advice to a public library patron = 125 points.

Final exam = 200 points. [The final exam is an open book exam; you are required to return your answers to me within 96 hours of the exam being distributed, and must work individually (there must be no collusion between students, nor the seeking of assistance from librarians or any other person). The exam will be comprised of 50 questions, each question carrying 4 points].

## **Grades:**

Maximum number of points possible = **500**.

Grade “**A**” = **450 to 500** points

Grade “**B**” = **400 to 449** points

Grade “**C**” = **350 to 399** points

Grade “**D**” = **300 to 349** points

Grade “**F**” = **0 to 299** points

Rubric and grading information for the discussion board and worksheet assignments appear in the appendices at the end of this syllabus. For information about all other assignments, please refer to the assignment itself.

## **Due Dates:**

The first day of class is Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> August 2014. The last day of class is Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2013.

The course is organized by weeks (Monday through Sunday).

Please check the Course Schedule for a comprehensive list of due dates for all assignments for this course.

**The Midterm Assignment is due at 12.00pm (noon) Eastern Daylight Time on Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014.**

**The Final Exam will be distributed via BlazeVIEW at 12.00pm (noon) Eastern Standard Time on Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2014. Completed answers must be submitted by 12.00pm (noon) Eastern Standard Time on Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> December 2014.**

Please contact me **as soon as possible** if any of your worksheets, discussion board postings, assignments, or exam responses will be late because of **illness, family emergency, or any other legitimate problem** that precludes you from submitting your work on time. In such instances, I will **always** work with you in determining an appropriate due date for submitting your assignment.

**Caution:** Work which is submitted late in the absence of an approval from myself, or where no legitimate reason for late submission exists, will be subject to **heavy penalties; (10% of the total point score awarded to any piece of work will be deducted from the overall score for each 24 hour period the work is late, culminating in an award of 0 points once the work becomes 96 hours overdue).**

## **Course Policies:**

### Discussion Board Conduct

Please be respectful and professional. You will have the opportunity to make postings to various discursive threads. Additionally, once a fortnight, in response to specific threads you are required to:

- Post your **own response** to the discussion question for that week. Please be sure to post your original response in time to allow responses from your peers.
- Post a minimum of **two substantial replies** to postings by other students.

These postings will contribute to your Discussion Board points.

### Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty is not tolerated in this class. As prospective experts and leaders in your fields of expertise, it is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty, and how to avoid it.

Students should familiarize themselves with Valdosta State University's Academic Honesty Policy and Procedures, available at:

<http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/AcademicHonestyPoliciesandProcedures.shtml>

*Plagiarism:* Sadly, it is my experience that many instances of plagiarism occur as a result of carelessness. However, carelessness is no defense to this serious academic honesty offence.

Please be aware that plagiarism has serious consequences (in this instance, the award of 0 points for any assignment containing plagiarized content). Remember: if in doubt, always cite. You are extremely unlikely to suffer any sort of penalty for over-citation! Better that, than an accusation of plagiarism.

You should review this guide to avoiding plagiarism:  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/1/>

*Cheating:* I will not tolerate any form of deliberate cheating in my classes (whether or not this conduct also involves plagiarism). If such an instance arises (and I sincerely hope that it does not), the consequences are straightforward: I will award the student(s) concerned a grade of F for the class, and submit a Report of Academic Dishonesty to the Student Conduct Office. Note: unless specifically told otherwise, you should assume that you are to complete all worksheets, assignments, and exams individually. Colluding with friends, colleagues, fellow students, or obtaining assistance from any 3<sup>rd</sup> party, when you are supposed to be working individually, would certainly represent an example of deliberate cheating.

### Accessibility

This course will be administered in full compliance with Valdosta State University's policies regarding accessibility. For further information, please see the Access Office's website at <http://www.valdosta.edu/access/index.shtml> Please contact me if there is an issue regarding accessibility that you wish to bring to my attention.

## **A final word:**

It is my fervent hope that you find this class to be an academically stimulating and rewarding experience. I am excited to be the Course Instructor for MLIS 7150, and look forward to discussing class topics with students. It is rare for an instructor to be able to teach a class that directly addresses his or her own profession. I am pleased to have the opportunity to do this, and hope that the class benefits from being taught from a practitioner's perspective. Along the way we will encounter colleagues of mine who will also share their insight and experience.

I am aware that online classes can sometimes cause students to feel more isolated than is the case with classroom based instruction. To counter this, I encourage you to interact actively with the course materials and participate in discussions with all members of the class via the discussion boards. Also, if, at any point, you have any questions or concerns about the class or your progress, then please **do not** hesitate to contact me (see contact details in the "Instructor Information" section, above.)

Let's hope this turns out to be a rewarding fall semester of 2014.

See you at the discussion boards!

Howard.



## Appendix 1:

### Discussion Board Grading Rubric

	<b>Grade “A” (10 points)</b>	<b>Grade “B” (8 or 9 points)</b>	<b>Grade “C” (7 points)</b>	<b>Grade D (6 points)</b>	<b>Grade F (0 to 5 points)</b>
<b>Timeliness</b>	<p>1 original and 2 response posts are complete.</p> <p>The student engaged in lively discussion, early and often.</p>	<p>1 original and 2 response posts are complete.</p> <p>The student engaged in discussion, allowing time for responses from peers.</p>	<p>1 original and 2 response posts are complete.</p> <p>The student engaged in discussion, but in a brief or tardy manner.</p>	<p>1 original and 2 response posts are complete.</p> <p>Very brief “last minute” responses, posted just before the assignment is due.</p>	<p>Missing original or response posts.</p>
<b>Content</b>	<p>Original thoughts.</p> <p>Detailed critique of assigned readings or topics presented for discussion.</p> <p>Courteous and intellectual considerations of peers’ posts, with detailed responses.</p>	<p>Original thoughts.</p> <p>Relevant consideration of readings or topics.</p> <p>On-topic responses to peers’ posts.</p>	<p>Clichéd thoughts.</p> <p>Limited consideration of readings or topics.</p> <p>Limited responses to peers’ posts.</p>	<p>Wholly unoriginal thoughts.</p> <p>Inadequate consideration of readings or topics.</p> <p>Cursory responses to peers’ posts.</p>	<p>“Me too” type posts, or wholly off-topic posts and responses.</p>
<b>Style &amp; Clarity</b>	<p>Erudite, academic, and clear, with no grammatical or spelling errors.</p>	<p>Straightforward and comprehensible.</p>	<p>Writing contains errors which may hinder comprehension.</p>	<p>Poor quality writing, containing serious flaws, slang, or other unprofessional terminology.</p>	<p>Writing simply cannot be understood.</p>

## Appendix 2:

### Worksheet Grading Rubric

	<b>Grade “A” (10 points)</b>	<b>Grade “B” (8 or 9 points)</b>	<b>Grade “C” (7 points)</b>	<b>Grade D (6 points)</b>	<b>Grade F (0 to 5 points)</b>
<b>Timeliness</b>	The worksheet is submitted before the deadline.	The worksheet is submitted before the deadline.	The worksheet is submitted before the deadline.	The worksheet is submitted before the deadline.	The worksheet is not submitted in a timely manner.
<b>Content</b>	Each question is answered fully, with clear explanation of the answer provided by the student.	A perfectly adequate answer, with good accompanying explanation.	An answer which addresses the question set, but in perfunctory fashion.	A mostly inadequate or incomplete answer.	A wholly inadequate or incomplete answer.
<b>Style &amp; Clarity</b>	Erudite, academic, and clear, with no grammatical or spelling errors.	Straightforward and comprehensible.	Writing contains errors which may hinder comprehension.	Poor quality writing, containing serious flaws, slang, or other unprofessional terminology.	Writing simply cannot be understood.

Grading rubrics for the following assignments are incorporated in the assignment instructions (in other words, please refer to the assignments themselves):

- Student consultation memorandum OR Emailed advice to a public library patron
- Final exam